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(54) **SIGNAL DETECTION WITH ADJUSTABLE  
NUMBER OF INTERFERRING SIGNALS**

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This patent is subject to a terminal dis-  
claimer.

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Primary Examiner — Eva Puente

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Systems, methods, and other embodiments associated with  
signal detection with an adjustable number of interfering  
signals. According to one embodiment an apparatus includes  
an interferer counter, a detection method selector, and a signal  
detector. The interferer counter is configured to identify a  
number of active interfering signals in a received signal. The  
detection method selector is configured to select a signal  
detection method based, at least in part, on the number of  
active interfering signals identified by the interferer counter.  
In this manner, when one interfering signal is identified, a  
detection method having a first order is selected; and when  
two interfering signals are identified, the detection method  
having a second order is selected. The signal detector is  
configured to process the received signal according to the  
signal detection method selected by the detection method  
selector to detect an intended signal in the received signal.

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Jun. 14, 2011, now Pat. No. 8,687,750.

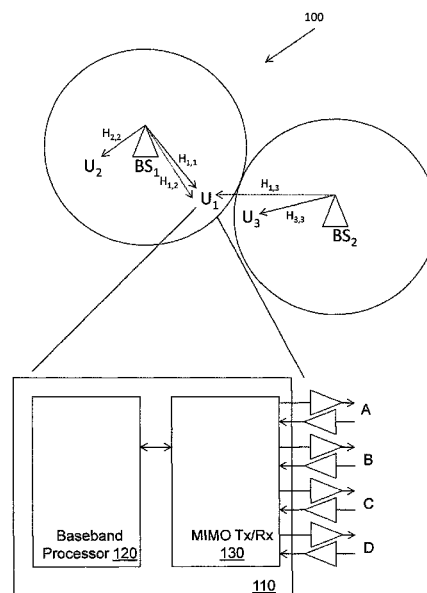
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**H03D 1/04** (2006.01)  
**H04B 1/10** (2006.01)

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CPC ..... **H04B 1/10** (2013.01)

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See application file for complete search history.

**20 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets**



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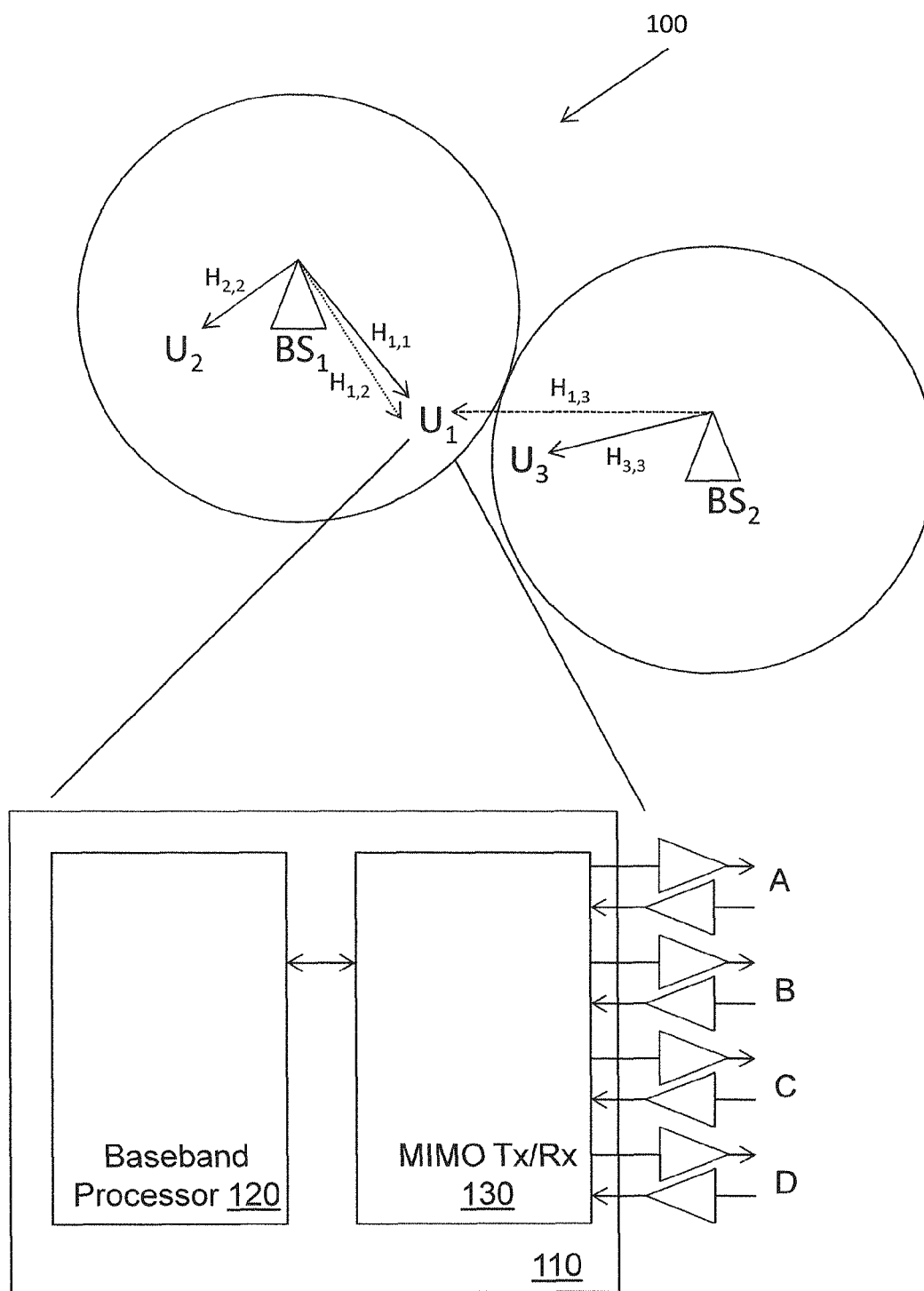


FIG. 1

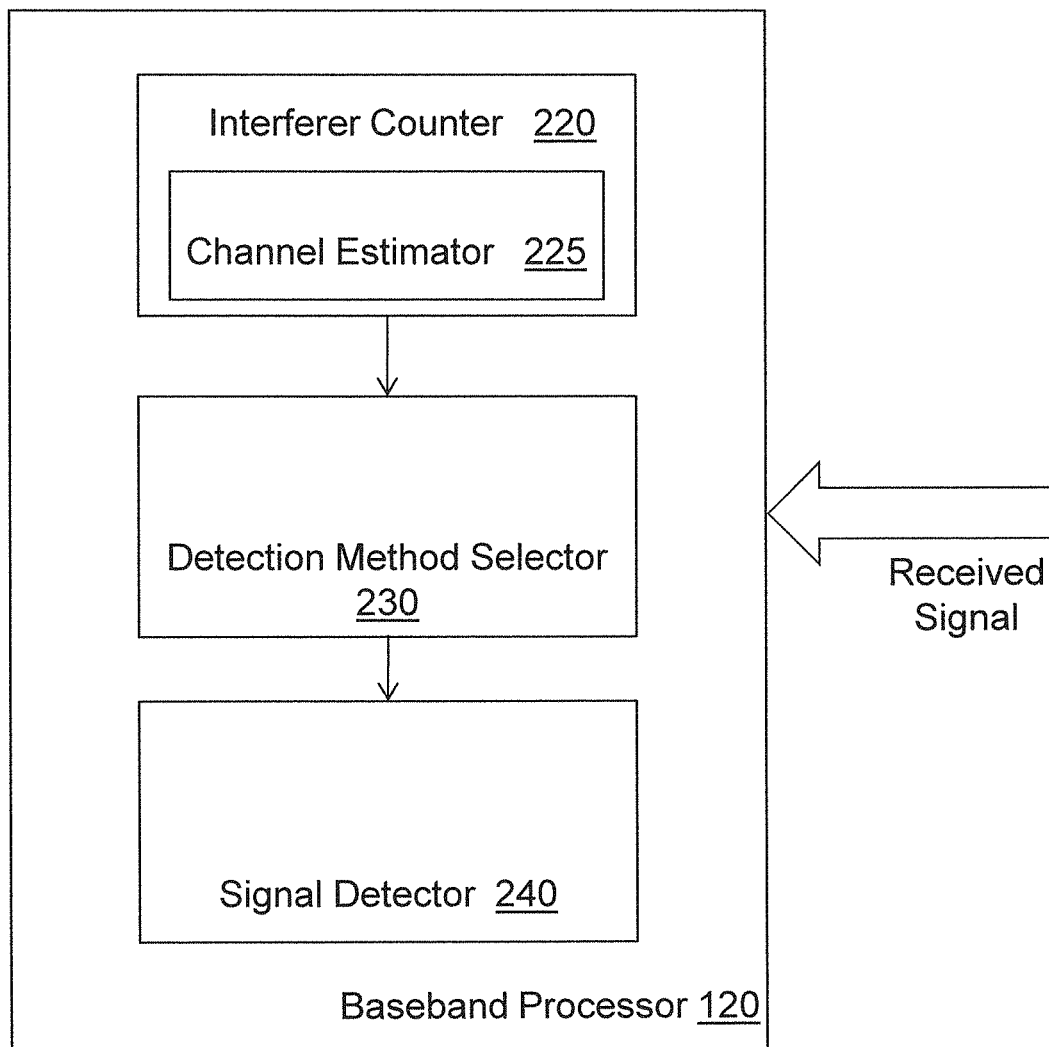


FIG. 2

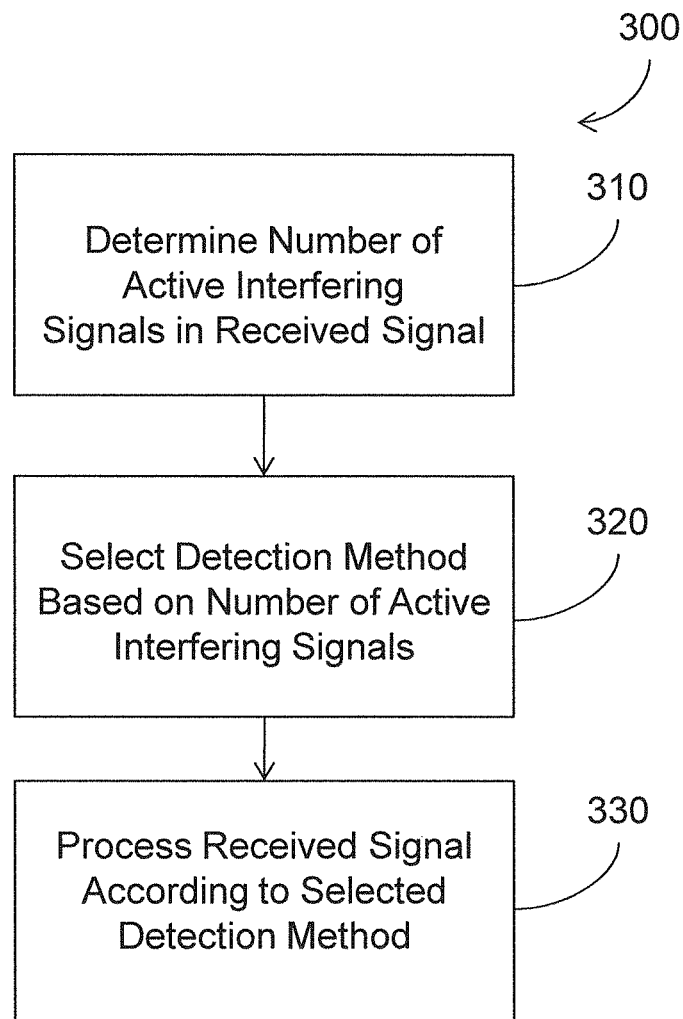


FIG. 3

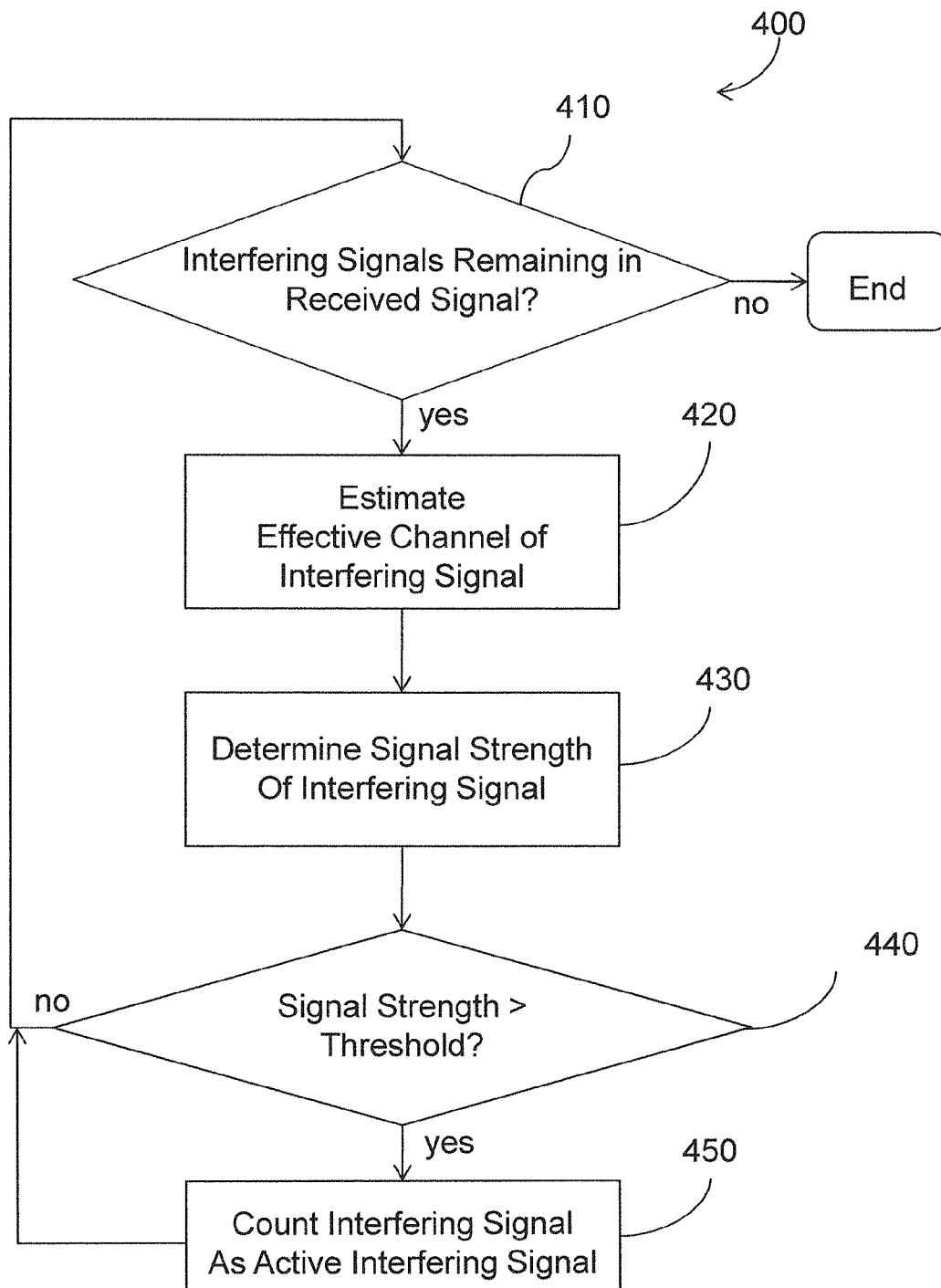


FIG. 4

## SIGNAL DETECTION WITH ADJUSTABLE NUMBER OF INTERFERING SIGNALS

### CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

The patent disclosure is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/159,931 filed Jun. 14, 2011, now U.S. Pat. No. 8,687,750, which claims benefit under 35 USC §119(e) to U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/358,597 filed on Jun. 25, 2010, which are both hereby wholly incorporated by reference.

### BACKGROUND

Multiple Input Multiple Output (MIMO) systems are becoming popular in wireless communications to leverage aspects of intersymbol interference to potentially increase the bandwidth efficiency of existing spectra. In wireless communication, radio waves do not propagate in a straight line between the transmitter and receiver, but rather bounce and scatter randomly off objects in the environment. This scattering, known as multipath, results in multiple copies of the transmitted signal arriving at the receiver via different scatter paths. MIMO leverages multipath to enhance transmission accuracy and allow multiple signals to be broadcast at the same frequency. This is done by treating the multiple scatter paths as separate parallel sub channels, each capable of bearing distinct data.

MIMO operates by splitting a discrete outbound signal into multiple substreams using an array of transmitter antennas to simultaneously launch the parallel substreams. The outbound signal may be de-multiplexed into a number of parallel data streams or multiple copies of the outbound signal may be transmitted by the antennas. All the substreams are transmitted in the same frequency band, so spectrum is efficiently utilized. Another array of antennas in the receiving device, is used to pick up the multiple transmitted substreams and their scattered signals. Each receive antenna picks up all of the incident transmitted substreams superimposed as observed components of the received signal vector, not separately. However, the multiple substreams are all scattered slightly differently, since they originate from different transmit antennas that are located at different points in space. These scattering differences allow the substreams to be identified and recovered from the observed components of the received signal vector.

While MIMO facilitates efficient utilization of spectrum, it presents additional challenges in detecting the signal substreams intended for a given receiving device. For example, signals intended for other receiving devices may be broadcast simultaneously or nearly simultaneously in the same frequency band by the same transmitter array. In addition, neighboring transmitter arrays also transmit in the same frequency band.

### SUMMARY

In general, in one aspect this specification discloses an apparatus for detecting an intended signal in a received signal. The apparatus includes an interferer counter, a detection method selector, and a signal detector. The interferer counter is configured to identify a number of active interfering signals in a received signal. The detection method selector is configured to select a signal detection method based, at least in part, on the number of active interfering signals identified by the interferer counter. In this manner, when one interfering signal

is identified, a detection method having a first order is selected; and when two interfering signals are identified, the detection method having a second order is selected. The signal detector is configured to process the received signal according to the signal detection method selected by the detection method selector to detect an intended signal in the received signal.

In general, in another aspect, this specification discloses a method for detecting an intended signal in a received signal. The method includes determining a number of active interfering signals in a received signal and selecting a detection method based, at least in part, on the number of active interfering signals. In this manner, when one interfering signal is identified, a detection method having a first order is selected; and when two interfering signals are identified, the detection method having a second order is selected. The method also includes processing the received signal according to the selected detection method to detect an intended signal in the received signal.

In general, in another aspect, this specification discloses a device for detecting an intended signal in a received signal. The system includes a transmitter/receiver array and a baseband processor. The transmitter/receiver antenna array is configured to receive a plurality of signal streams combined with interfering signals that together form a received signal. The baseband processor is configured to determine a number of active interfering signals based, at least in part, on the received signal. The baseband processor is configured to select a detection method based, at least in part, on the number of active interfering signals. In this manner, when one interfering signal is identified, a detection method having a first order is selected; and when two interfering signals are identified, the detection method having a second order is selected. The baseband processor is configured to process the received signal according to the selected detection method to detect the intended signal in the received signal.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated in and constitute a part of the specification, illustrate various systems, methods, and other embodiments of the disclosure. It will be appreciated that the illustrated element boundaries (e.g., boxes, groups of boxes, or other shapes) in the figures represent one example of the boundaries. In some embodiments, one element may be designed as multiple elements or that multiple elements may be designed as one element. In some embodiments, an element shown as an internal component of another element may be implemented as an external component and vice versa. Furthermore, elements may not be drawn to scale.

FIG. 1 illustrates a schematic diagram of an example MIMO communication system depicting multiple base stations and multiple receiving devices.

FIG. 2 illustrates one embodiment of an apparatus associated with signal detection with an adjustable number of interfering signals.

FIG. 3 illustrates one embodiment of a method associated with signal detection with an adjustable number of interfering signals.

FIG. 4 illustrates one embodiment of a method associated with signal detection with an adjustable number of interfering signals.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Described herein are example systems, methods, and other embodiments associated with signal detection with an adjust-

able number of interfering signals. The efficacy with which many signal detection techniques can isolate a given signal from among interfering signals is often dependent on the number of interfering signals. The number of inter-cell and intra-cell interfering signals is not typically known to a mobile device. This may lead to the use of more computationally intense signal detection methods that do not rely on a priori knowledge of the number of interfering signals.

The systems and methods described herein identify a number of active interfering signals in a received signal and select a signal detection method that is tailored to that specific number of interfering signals. Knowledge of the number of interfering signals may allow a simpler signal detection technique to be used. Actively determining the number of interfering signals at any given time also allows different signal detection methods to be selected for different instances of signal data as interfering signals appear and disappear.

FIG. 1 illustrates an example multiuser Multiple Input Multiple Output communication system 100. Three mobile devices (e.g., mobile devices that communicate data by way of radio transmissions) U1, U2, and U3 are presently interfacing with the system 100. The system 100 includes two base stations (e.g., cellular telephone transmitter/receivers towers) BS<sub>1</sub> and BS<sub>2</sub>. An approximate boundary for each base station's range, referred to as the base stations "cell", is shown as a circle surrounding the base station. While the systems and methods herein will be described in the context of a multiuser MIMO environment, the systems and method may be used in any communication system in which a signal detection technique can be selected given the potential existence of a number of interfering signals in a received signal.

Base station BS<sub>1</sub> is communicating with mobile device U<sub>1</sub> by way of an effective channel H<sub>1,1</sub>. The effective channel H<sub>1,1</sub> describes the communication link or signal path between BS<sub>1</sub> and U<sub>1</sub>. The effective channel represents the combined effect of signal deflection due to obstacles (hills, walls, and so on), scattering, fading, and power decay due to the distance between BS<sub>1</sub> and U<sub>1</sub>. If U<sub>1</sub> is in motion, the effective channel will be constantly changing. Further, other obstacles in the signal path that affect the channel may be moving. Thus, information about the current state of the effective channel of a given mobile device is typically either transmitted to or determined by a base station so that the base station can adapt transmissions to current channel conditions. Likewise, the mobile device adapts its reception based on current channel conditions.

One way to estimate the instantaneous effective channel between a mobile device and a base station is for the mobile device to transmit a pilot sequence that is known to all base stations. The base station can determine the effective channel based on characteristics of the pilot sequence when it is received by the base station. The pilot signal can be inserted in predetermined positions in frames of data-carrying signals from the mobile device.

Referring again to FIG. 1, BS<sub>1</sub> is also communicating with U<sub>2</sub> by way of effective channel H<sub>2,2</sub>. The signal being transmitted to U<sub>2</sub> may interfere with the signal being transmitted to U<sub>1</sub>. This intra-cell interfering signal travels along effective channel H<sub>1,2</sub> to U<sub>1</sub>. If BS<sub>1</sub> is transmitting to U<sub>1</sub> and U<sub>2</sub> at the same time and using the same frequency band, U<sub>1</sub> will detect that this signal has traveled along a different effective channel and will typically employ one or more signal detection methods to filter the effects of the interfering signal. Because many modern wireless communication systems have adjacent cells transmitting in the same frequency bands, mobile devices are also subject to inter-cell interference. BS<sub>2</sub> is exchanging signals with U<sub>3</sub> by way of effective channel H<sub>3,3</sub>. This signal also

interferes with the signal being transmitted by BS<sub>1</sub> to U<sub>1</sub>. In addition to the signal on effective channel H<sub>1,2</sub>, U<sub>1</sub> will need to filter the signal from BS<sub>2</sub> on effective channel H<sub>1,3</sub>.

One embodiment of a wireless signal processing unit 110 is shown in FIG. 1. The wireless signal processing unit 110 is part of the mobile device U<sub>1</sub>. The wireless signal processing unit 110 includes a MIMO Transmitter/Receiver radio 130. The radio 130 includes four antennas that are configured to receive the multiple signal streams discussed in the Background. The radio 130 provides these streams to a baseband processor 120. The baseband processor 120 combines the multiple signal streams and also performs signal detection and/or filtering based on information about the effective channels of the signal streams to estimate an intended signal meant for the particular mobile device U<sub>1</sub>. The estimated intended signal is demodulated into data and provided to other components on the mobile device.

In general and in some embodiments, the signal processing unit 110 from FIG. 1 may be implemented on a chip including one or more integrated circuits configured to perform one or more of the functions described herein. The signal processing unit 110 may be implemented in a computing device, for example, a computer, a laptop, a server, a cell phone, a handheld computing device, or other type of device that uses memory. The baseband processor 120 may be part of the same device as the signal processing unit 110 or may be external to the apparatus.

Referring now to FIG. 2, a functional block diagram of one embodiment of the baseband processor 120 is shown. A signal from the radio 130 (FIG. 1) is received by baseband processor 120. For the purposes of this description, it is assumed that spatial multiplexing is being performed on the wirelessly transmitted signals and that the received signal includes M signals, including spatial signal streams for the mobile device U<sub>1</sub> (referred to as the intended signal) and M-1 interfering signals (M is 3 for the example in FIG. 1, with the number of interfering signals being 2). For the MIMO system shown, each signal includes a number of spatial streams S per signal that is greater than or equal to one. The received signal y can be expressed as:

$$y = H_1 x_1 + H_2 x_2 + \dots + H_M x_M + z$$

where

M: number of user to be detected

H<sub>i</sub> = R × S<sub>i</sub> effective channel of user i

R: number of receiver antennas,

S<sub>i</sub>: number of spatial streams (layers) of user i

x<sub>i</sub> (= S<sub>i</sub> × 1): transmitted symbol vector for user i

z: circularly symmetric Gaussian noise, E[zz<sup>H</sup>] = σ<sup>2</sup>I<sub>R</sub>

The received signal can also be written as:

$$S_{Tot} = \sum_{i=1}^M S_i$$

$$y = [H_1 \ H_2 \ \dots \ H_M] [x_1 \ x_2 \ \dots \ x_M]^T + z$$

$$= Hx + z$$

where

$$H = [H_1 \ H_2 \ \dots \ H_M] : R \times S_{Tot} \text{ matrix}$$

$$x = [x_1 \ x_2 \ \dots \ x_M]^T : S_{Tot} \times 1 \text{ vector}$$

While the number of streams for the user S<sub>1</sub> (the intended signal for mobile device U<sub>1</sub>) is known, the number of streams for interfering users may not be known by the mobile device.



## 5

In some mobile devices, signal detection methods like Maximum Likelihood (ML) detection are performed to isolate the intended signal. In ML, the processor chooses a signal  $x$  from the multiple signals in the received signal that minimizes the Euclidean distance (ED) between a given signal (as received on its effective channel) and the received signal:

$$\hat{x} = \underset{x \in \Omega^S}{\operatorname{argmin}} \|y - Hx\|^2$$

Thus, ML detection, known as a “hard detection” technique, requires an exhaustive distance calculation for each interfering signal in the received signal, making it computationally intense. Other applications of ML detection utilize a “soft demodulation approach” in which simplified versions of ML are employed that reduce the number and complexity of the required computations. All ML detection methods, including sphere decoders, K-Best, M-algorithm, Chase detectors require knowledge of the Modulation Coding Sets (MCS) for the interfering signals, making these techniques unusable when the mobile device does not have MCS information about interfering signals.

Another signal detection technique is Ordered Successive Interference Cancellation (OSIC) in which data symbols in a received signal are cancelled serially in order of decreasing signal to noise ratio (SNR) until only the intended signal remains. One particular OSIC algorithm is zero-forcing (ZF) based. Similar to ML based detection methods, OSIC method cannot be employed in the absence of MCS information for the interfering signals. The following describes a zero-forcing OSIC technique:

Initialization

$G_1 = H^+$  : Find pseudo inverse

$i = 1$

Recursion

-----  
 $k_i = \underset{j \in \{k_1, \dots, k_{i-1}\}}{\operatorname{argmin}} \|(G_i)_j\|^2$  : Find next symbol to be detected

$W_{K_i} = (G_i)_{k_i}$  : Find nulling matrix

$\tilde{x}_{k_i} = \operatorname{dec}(W_{K_i}^T y_i)$  : Interference nulling and slicing

$y_{i+1} = y_i - \tilde{x}_{k_i}(H)_{k_i}$  : Interference cancellation

$G_{i+1} = (H_{k_i}^-)^+$  : Update pseudo inverse

$i = i + 1$

-----  
 where  $(A)_j$  is  $j$ th row of  $A$  and  $H_{k_i}^-$  is  $H$  with the rows of  $k_1, \dots, k_i$  removed

Linear signal detection methods are relatively simple to implement and can be realized without knowledge of MCS information about interfering signals. However, the performance quality of linear signal detection methods depends heavily on accurate information about the number of interfering signals. Two linear detection techniques are Maximal Ratio Combining and MMSE.

## 6

Generally, a linear detector can be designed that selects a most likely intended signal based on the following:

$$\bar{x}_1 = [\bar{x}_1 \dots \bar{x}_{S_1}]^T = \operatorname{dec}(\bar{x}_1) = [\operatorname{dec}(\bar{x}_1) \dots \operatorname{dec}(\bar{x}_{S_1})]^T$$

$$\text{where } \operatorname{dec}(\bar{x}) = \underset{x \in \Omega}{\operatorname{argmin}} \|x - \bar{x}\|,$$

$$\bar{x}_1 = \{G_i y\}_{1:S_1} \{A\}_{p,q} = [a_p a_{p+1} \dots a_q]^T \text{ where } A = [a_1 a_2 \dots]^T$$

The detection method is different according to  $G$ :

$$G = \begin{cases} (H^H H + \sigma_n^2 I)^{-1} H^H, & \text{MMSE} \\ H^H (\operatorname{diag}(H^H H))^{-1}, & \text{MRC} \end{cases}$$

Given  $S_1=1$ , under non-zero interference MMSE (Minimum Mean Squared Error) performs better than MRC. Without interference, MRC is better than or equal to MMSE in performance, depending on the quality of channel estimation. Thus, if it can be determined that there are zero interferers it may be advantageous to select MRC, while selecting MMSE when one or more interferers are present.

Referring to FIG. 2, to effectively employ linear detection methods, the baseband processor includes an interferer counter 220 that counts a number of active interfering signals in the received signal. This number of active interfering signals is provided to a detection method selector 230 that selects a detection method based on the number of active interferers. A signal detector 240 processes the received signal according to the selected detection method to detect the intended signal in the received signal.

FIG. 3 outlines one embodiment of a signal processing method 300 that can be performed by the baseband processor 120. At 310, the number of active interfering signals in a received signal are determined. At 320, a signal detection method is selected based on the number of active number of interfering signals. At 330, the received signal is processed using the selected signal detection method. Thus, it can be said that the baseband processor 120 includes an adaptive signal detector where the number of interfering signals is adjustable.

Referring again to FIG. 2, in one embodiment, the interferer counter 220 includes a channel estimator 225 that estimates the effective channels for the signals within the received signal. The channel estimator 225 may perform channel estimation using known training sequences which are transmitted periodically (e.g., at the start of each frame). A training sequence may include one or more pilot symbols. Orthogonal Frequency-Division Multiplexing communication systems employ designated symbols that include pilot information on the frequency tones (sub frequency bands). The pilot symbol(s) are inserted in front of each transmitted frame. The channel estimator 225 uses the known pilot values to estimate the transmission media characteristics on each of the frequency tones used for data transmission to determine an estimated effective channel for each signal in the received signal, including the intended signal and interfering signals.

Referring now to FIG. 4, one embodiment of a signal processing method 400 that can be employed by the interferer counter 220 is outlined. At 410, the interferer counter determines if there are any signals in the received signal remaining for consideration. If so, at 420, the channel estimator 225 estimates an effective channel for a remaining interfering

signal. At **430**, the estimated effective channel for an interfering signal is used to determine a signal power for the interfering signal:

$$E\{\|H_2x_2\|^2\}.$$

The signal power is compared to a threshold, such as a noise power of the received signal:

$$E\{|z|^2\}(\sigma^2).$$

in some embodiments,

$$E\{\|H_2x_2\|^2\}$$

is compared to

$$\alpha E\{|z|^2\},$$

where  $\alpha$  is a predetermined threshold factor. At **440**, if the signal power of an interfering signal is greater than the noise power, then at **450** the signal is determined to be an active interfering signal. In this manner, only those interfering signals strong enough to have a significant effect on the detection process are considered. The method **400** is repeated, keeping a count of the number of active signals, until no further signals remain.

The interfering signal detection performed at **440** can use a large variety of thresholds. The threshold can be adaptive and computed online, or prefixed by offline measurements. For example, the threshold can be a scaled noise power as described above, a minimal interfering signal power level, a minimal interfering signal power to noise power ratio, a maximal intended signal power to interfering signal power ratio, and so on.

Returning once again to FIG. 2, the detection method selector **230** uses the number of active interfering signals to process the signal. In general, if the number of active interfering signals is zero, the detection method selector selects a MIMO detection method with an order equal to the number of spatial streams for the intended signal. If the number of active interfering signals is greater than zero, the detection method selector selects a MIMO detection method having an order corresponding to the number of spatial streams for all active interfering signals increased by the number of spatial streams for the intended signal.

In one embodiment in which each signal (both the intended and interfering signals) has one spatial stream (i.e.,  $S_1, S_2, \dots, S_M=1$ ), the detection method selector selects a Maximum Ratio Combining detection method if the number of active interfering signals is determined to be zero. This is equivalent to selecting a Minimum Mean Squared Error (MMSE) Detection method with an order equal to the number of spatial streams for the intended signal **51** when the number of active interfering signals is determined to be zero. If the number of active interfering signals is determined to be greater than zero, the detection method selector selects a MMSE detection method having an order corresponding to the

number of active interfering signals increased by one (the number of spatial streams in the intended signal).

In other embodiments in which the number of spatial streams is larger than 1, the detection method selector selects a MMSE detection method having an order corresponding to the number of spatial streams for all active interfering signals increased by the number of spatial streams for the intended signal.

For example, if the number of active interfering signals is determined to be one, the signal detection method selector **230** will select a second order MMSE technique using  $H=[H_1H_2]$  and  $x=[x_1x_2]^T$  (Equation G, first line). If the number of interfering signals is determined to be zero, a first order MMSE or zero-forcing detection technique is selected, which is equivalent to MRC detection in which  $H=[H_1]$  and  $x=[x_1]^T$ . (Equation G, second line).

Linear signal detection methods and systems have been the focus of the described embodiment. However, the described interfering signal counting technique may be used to provide a count of the number of interfering signals for use with any suitable signal detection technique that performs differently depending on the number of interfering signals. For example Successive Interference signal detection may be performed given the number of interfering signals and MCS information.

## DEFINITIONS

The following includes definitions of selected terms employed herein. The definitions include various examples and/or forms of components that fall within the scope of a term and that may be used for implementation. The examples are not intended to be limiting and are to be used in conjunction with ordinary meanings. Both singular and plural forms of terms may be within the definitions.

References to “one embodiment”, “an embodiment”, “one example”, “an example”, and so on, indicate that the embodiment(s) or example(s) so described may include a particular feature, structure, characteristic, property, element, or limitation, but that not every embodiment or example necessarily includes that particular feature, structure, characteristic, property, element or limitation. Furthermore, repeated use of the phrase “in one embodiment” does not necessarily refer to the same embodiment, though it may.

“Logic”, as used herein, includes but is not limited to hardware, firmware, instructions stored on a non-transitory medium or in execution on a machine, and/or combinations of each to perform a function(s) or an action(s), and/or to cause a function or action from another logic, method, and/or system. Logic may include a microprocessor, a discrete logic (e.g., ASIC), an analog circuit, a digital circuit, a programmed logic device, a memory device containing instructions, and so on. Logic may include one or more gates, combinations of gates, or other circuit components. Where multiple logics are described, it may be possible to incorporate the multiple logics into one physical logic. Similarly, where a single logic is described, it may be possible to distribute that single logic between multiple physical logics. One or more of the components and functions described herein may be implemented using one or more of the logic elements. The interferer counter **220**, channel estimator **225** detection method selector **230** and/or the signal detector **240** (see FIG. 2) may be embodied as logics.

While for purposes of simplicity of explanation, illustrated methodologies in the figures are shown and described as a series of blocks. The methodologies are not limited by the order of the blocks as some blocks can occur in different

orders and/or concurrently with other blocks from that shown and described. Moreover, less than all the illustrated blocks may be used to implement an example methodology. Blocks may be combined or separated into multiple components. Furthermore, additional and/or alternative methodologies can employ additional actions that are not illustrated.

To the extent that the term “includes” or “including” is employed in the detailed description or the claims, it is intended to be inclusive in a manner similar to the term “comprising” as that term is interpreted when employed as a transitional word in a claim.

While example systems, methods, and so on have been illustrated by describing examples, and while the examples have been described in considerable detail, it is not the intention of the applicants to restrict or in any way limit the scope of the appended claims to such detail. It is, of course, not possible to describe every conceivable combination of components or methodologies for purposes of describing the systems, methods, and so on described herein. Therefore, the disclosure is not limited to the specific details, the representative apparatus, and illustrative examples shown and described. Thus, this application is intended to embrace alterations, modifications, and variations that fall within the scope of the appended claims.

Previous Disclaimers Rescinded

Applicant respectfully informs the Patent Office that the present disclosure is a broadening continuation. Applicant rescinds all disclaimers made during the prosecution of the parent application(s), which may have included statements or amendments that may have disclaimed scope. Accordingly, the previous disclaimers, and the prior art that it was made to avoid, may need to be and should be re-visited.

What is claimed is:

**1.** An apparatus, comprising:

an interferer counter configured to identify a number of spatial streams for active interfering signals in a received signal;

a detection method selector configured to select a signal detection method having an order based, at least in part, on the number of spatial streams for active interfering signals identified by the interferer counter such that

(i) when zero spatial streams for interfering signals are identified, a detection method having a first order is selected,

(ii) when a first number of spatial streams for interfering signal is identified, the detection method having a second order based on the first number is selected; and

a signal detector configured to process the received signal according to the signal detection method selected by the detection method selector to detect an intended signal in the received signal.

**2.** The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the interferer counter further comprises a channel estimator configured to estimate a channel of an interfering signal in the received signal by interpreting a pilot signal embedded in the interfering signal.

**3.** The apparatus of claim 1, wherein when the number of active interfering signals is zero, the detection method selector is configured to select a Maximum Ratio Combining (MRC) detection method.

**4.** The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the interferer counter is configured to identify an interfering signal in the received signal as an active interfering signal when a signal power of the interfering signal exceeds a threshold.

**5.** The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the threshold comprises one or more of:

a scaled noise power level;

a minimal signal power level;

a minimal signal-to-noise power ratio; and

a maximal intended signal power to interfering signal power ratio.

**6.** The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the interferer counter is configured to determine a signal power of the interfering signal based, at least in part, on an estimated channel for the interfering signal.

**7.** The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:

if the number of spatial streams for active interfering signals is zero, the detection method selector is configured to select a MIMO detection method with an order equal to a number of spatial streams for an intended signal; and

if the number of spatial streams for active interfering signals is one or more, the detection method selector is configured to select a MIMO detection method having an order corresponding to the number of spatial streams for all active interfering signals increased by the number of spatial streams for the intended signal.

**8.** The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the detection method selector is configured to select a Minimum Mean Squared Error (MMSE) detection method having an order corresponding to the number of active interfering signals increased by one.

**9.** The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the detection method selector is configured to select a detection method that detects the intended signal independent of a modulation coding set associated with the active interfering signals.

**10.** A method, comprising:

identifying a number of spatial streams for active interfering signals in a received signal;

selecting a signal detection method having an order based, at least in part, on the number of spatial streams for the active interfering signals such that

(i) when zero spatial streams for interfering signals are identified, a detection method having a first order is selected,

(ii) when a first number of spatial streams for interfering signal is identified, the detection method having a second order based on the first number is selected; and

processing the received signal with a processor according to the selected detection method to detect an intended signal in the received signal.

**11.** The method of claim 10, wherein the identifying comprises:

comparing a signal power of an interfering signal in the received signal to a threshold based on the received signal; and

when the signal power of the interfering signal exceeds the threshold, determining that the interfering signal is an active interfering signal.

**12.** The method of claim 11, wherein the comparing comprises comparing to a threshold that comprises:

a scaled noise power level;

a minimal signal power level;

a minimal signal-to-noise power ratio; or

a maximal intended signal power to interfering signal power ratio.

**13.** The method of claim 11, further comprising determining the signal power based, at least in part, on a pilot signal embedded in the interfering signal.

**14.** The method of claim 10, comprising, when the number of active interfering signals is zero, selecting a Maximum Ratio Combining (MRC) detection method.

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15. The method of claim 10, wherein the selecting comprises:

if the number of spatial streams for active interfering signals is zero, selecting a MIMO detection method with an order equal to a number of spatial streams for an intended signal; and

if the number of spatial streams for active interfering signals is one or more, selecting a MIMO detection method having an order corresponding to the number of spatial streams for all active interfering signals increased by the number of spatial streams for the intended signal.

16. The method of claim 10, wherein the selecting comprises selecting a detection method that detects the intended signal independent of a modulation coding set associated with the active interfering signals.

17. A device comprising:

a transmitter/receiver antenna array configured to receive a plurality of signal spatial streams combined with zero or more spatial streams for interfering signals that together form a received signal; and

a baseband processor configured to:

identify a number of spatial streams for active interfering signals based, at least in part, on the received signal,

select a signal detection method having an order based, at least in part, on the number of spatial streams for active interfering signals identified by the baseband processor such that

(i) when zero spatial streams for interfering signals are identified, a detection method having a first order is selected,

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(ii) when a first number of spatial streams for interfering signal is identified, the detection method having a second order based on the first number is selected; and process the received signal according to the selected detection method to detect the intended signal in the received signal.

18. The device of claim 17, wherein the baseband processor is configured to:

estimate an effective channel of one or more interfering signals;

determine a signal power of the interfering signal on the effective channel;

compare the signal power of the interfering signal to a threshold based on the noise power of the received signal; and

when the signal power of the interfering signal exceeds the threshold, determining that the interfering signal is an active interfering signal.

19. The device of claim 17, wherein when the number of active interfering signals is zero, baseband processor is configured to select a Maximum Ratio Combining (MRC) detection method.

20. The device of claim 17, wherein the baseband processor is configured to:

select a MIMO detection method with an order equal to a number of spatial streams for an intended signal if the number of active interfering signals is zero; and

select a MIMO detection method having an order corresponding to the number of spatial streams for all active interfering signals increased by the number of spatial streams for the intended signal if the number of active interfering signals is one or more.

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